

# Managing School Attendance

## Addendum to the School Attendance Policy

### Supporting pupils' return to school following Covid-19 school closure

October 2020

The School fully re-opened to all pupils from September 2020. A risk assessment has been completed to ensure compliance with all of the current Government legislation.

#### The Law

The DfE guidance on school attendance has been updated and the August 2020 publication can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-attendance> . In addition, there is a temporary addendum on the recording of attendance in relation to Covid-19.

The DfE guidance on parental responsibility for behaviour and attendance <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/parental-responsibility-measures-for-behaviour-and-attendance> remains the current statutory guidance for local authorities, school leaders, school staff, governing bodies and the police with temporary arrangements published to cover the period of non-compulsory attendance. As outlined in the DfE guidance for full opening of schools <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools> attending school, if school is the choice of parents, it is now mandatory and therefore the legal duty given to parents and the powers of the local authority and schools to act if this duty is not met, are in place.

The Lincolnshire [Code of Conduct](#) is a locally agreed document that outlines the criteria used to trigger a fixed penalty notice. The temporary hold on issuing fines has now been lifted and therefore the Code of Conduct is in place which may result in parents being fined for not sending their child(ren) to school.

In summary, the expectation is that from September children who are registered pupils at a school will attend full-time. Full-time means, in accordance with the school rules.

There are specific codes to be used for attendance in relation to Covid-19. The link to this document is <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-attendance/addendum-recording-attendance-in-relation-to-coronavirus-covid-19->

[during-the-2020-to-2021-academic-year](#) and further information on these codes will be given below in *Attendance Codes and Education at home*.

## **Fixed Penalty Notices and Prosecutions**

During school closure, the government announced that all processes resulting in fixed penalty notices (FPN) and prosecutions for non-attendance would cease. This temporary hold is now lifted. Therefore, the duty on parents to ensure regular school attendance and the power to issue fixed penalty notices and prosecutions for failing to ensure regular school attendance are back in force.

Fixed Penalty Notices will be considered for the following reasons:

- Holidays in term-time. In line with the attendance policy.
- As a tool in the process of addressing more general poor attendance issues.

## **Attendance Codes and Education at home**

In addition to the codes listed in the School Attendance Policy the following codes will be used until further notice to deal with absences relating to Covid-19

### **Pupil experiencing symptoms:**

- The X code is an additional code to be used to indicate a child not attending in specific circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)
- Children who have symptoms should self-isolate and their attendance will be X coded until they take a Covid-19 test
- After the pupil tests positive they should be recorded as code I (illness) until they are able to return to school. This should be at least 10 days from the onset of their symptoms
- Children who test negative will be recorded as I (illness) following the test until they return to school. If they feel well and no longer have symptoms similar to coronavirus (Covid-19), they can stop self-isolating and return to school

### **Recent close contact with someone with Covid-19 symptoms but that person hasn't had a test yet and the pupil has no symptoms themselves:**

- If a member of the household has symptoms, the household should self-isolate whilst the member of the household gets a test. The child's attendance will be X coded
- If the member of the household tests negative, the pupils can stop self – isolating and return to school

### **Recent contact with positive Covid-19 person but no symptoms themselves:**

- If a member of the household tests positive, the pupil should self-isolate for 14 days. The X code will be used for this purpose
- Schools will seek advice or will be informed of who should self-isolate due to Covid-19 breakout within the school community. The X code will be used in these circumstances.
- As outlined in the guidance, holidays should only be taken outside term-time. This may result, however, in a period of quarantine that falls into the school

term. Only the period of quarantine falls under the 'not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)' criteria and this should be coded as X.

- Should future outbreaks result in children or members of their family being asked to shield, the family will receive a letter outlining this. Parents will need to share this letter with the school before non-attendance can be recorded as X under the criteria of shielding.
- There may be other circumstances when medical professionals advise a household to self-isolate. Examples of these are where a household member is due to have a hospital admission for an operation or women in the last 14 days of pregnancy. Schools may wish to seek confirmation from the professional of these circumstances.

## **Providing Education to Children at Home**

Clearly where no authorised reason for absence has been established, school work should not be provided at home. However, there will be situations where pupils are at home for justifiable reasons such as quarantine when they are not themselves ill. It is then expected that they will be provided with online schooling or some other form of remote education such as sending work home without delay. This should be monitored and marked during their time at home. This may also apply in a local lockdown situation if schools remain open but vulnerable children, or those with family members who are vulnerable, are required to shield.